

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior claim listings and versions:

1. (Currently Amended) A structure for decommissioning and transporting an offshore fixed oil production platform ~~comprising framework elements~~ formed by a deck and at least one supporting column, said structure comprising:

a U-shaped floating hull fitted with lifting legs configured to rest on the seabed, each lifting leg supporting a mechanical displacement apparatus housed in a bearing framework of said hull;

a shuttle positionable along the lifting legs and configured ~~operable~~ to move one of the ~~framework elements~~ deck and the at least one supporting column of the production platform, said shuttle comprising elements, each element provided for a respective lifting leg of the lifting legs; and

each element comprising a mechanical drive positioned on the associated lifting leg and ~~operable~~ configured to drive the respective element independently of remaining elements of the ~~elements of the shuttle on the other legs~~, and the element further comprising a connecting apparatus configured to connect with the ~~framework element~~ deck or the at least one supporting column.

wherein each element of the shuttle on each leg is separated from and free of direct physical contact with any other of the elements of the shuttle on another leg.

2. (Previously Presented) The structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hull includes a bearing framework for each leg and each element of the shuttle includes a vertical guidance branch on the corresponding bearing framework of the hull, and a top section comprising a horizontal branch supporting the mechanical drive of said element on the corresponding leg.

3. (Currently Amended) The structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein each lifting leg comprises a chord, and the mechanical drive of each element comprises two opposing plates supported by each chord of the corresponding lifting leg[[],];

each plate of the two opposing plates having a lateral face and including a series of teeth on the lateral face, and each element comprising a horizontal branch and at least two opposing

assemblies supported by the horizontal branch of said element, and each ~~formed of~~ assembly comprising a pinion driven rotationally and cooperating with one of the series of teeth.

4. (Previously Presented) The structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein the connecting apparatus comprises at least a horizontal plate supporting the deck and positioned on a bottom part of the vertical branch of each element.

5.(Currently Amended) The structure as claimed in claim 1, wherein the connecting apparatus connects to a ~~framework element formed by a~~ the at least one supporting column of the platform and comprises for each element of the shuttle a linear vertical traction device comprising a chain or cable and two locking assemblies, [[,]] one of said assemblies being supported by said element and the other of said assemblies being supported by the hull for a gradual vertical displacement of the supporting column by successive locking of said locking assemblies.

6. (Currently Amended) The structure as claimed in claim 5, wherein each locking assembly comprises two opposing locks ~~operable~~ configured to tilt vertically toward one another between a position releasing the traction device and a position blocking the traction device.

7. (Previously Presented) The structure as claimed in claim 1, further comprises an independent branch operable to seal a hull opening lockable on said hull.

8. (Currently Amended) A method of decommissioning and transporting a framework element of a fixed oil platform formed of a deck between a production site and a quay for disassembling the deck, the method comprising:

- positioning beneath the deck a transport structure comprising a U-shaped floating hull fitted with at least three lifting legs configured to rest on the seabed, and a shuttle including at least three elements, each element of the at least three elements provided for one of the at least three lifting legs and positionable independently of remaining elements of the at least three elements along a respective leg of at least three legs;
- applying the at least three lifting legs onto a seabed;
- lifting the hull and the shuttle to bring said shuttle into contact with the deck;

- locking the shuttle onto the lifting legs;
- lowering the hull to float the hull;
- separating the deck from supporting column;
- raising the deck via the intermediary of the shuttle under the rising action of the lifting legs;
- displacing the structure supporting the deck to release ~~said~~ the deck from the supporting column;
- lowering the shuttle supporting the deck to bring the shuttle onto the hull;
- floating the structure supporting the deck to the disassembly quay or to a site for unloading onto a barge;
- applying the lifting legs onto the ~~bottom~~ seabed to stabilize the hull;
- releasing the deck from the structure; and
- unloading the deck onto the quay or the barge,

wherein each element of the shuttle on each leg is separated from and free of direct physical contact with any other element of the shuttle on another leg.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein ~~the hull is a U-shaped floating hull fitted with at least three lifting legs configured to rest on the seabed,~~ each lifting leg supports ~~supporting~~ a mechanical displacement apparatus housed in a bearing framework of said hull, and the shuttle is positionable along the lifting legs and operable to move one of the framework elements of the production platform, said shuttle comprising at least three elements, ~~each element of the at least three elements provided for a lifting leg of the at least three lifting legs,~~ and each element comprises:

- a mechanical drive positioned on the associated lifting leg~~[[,]]~~ and operable to drive the respective element independently of remaining elements of the at least three elements, and
- a connecting apparatus configured to connect the element with the framework element.

10.(Previously Presented) A method of decommissioning and transporting a framework element of a fixed oil platform formed of a section of a supporting column between a production site and a quay for disassembling the supporting column the method comprising:

- positioning around the supporting column, a U-shaped floating hull fitted with at least three lifting legs for the hull, and a shuttle comprising at least three elements positionable along one of said legs independently of the hull;
- applying the lifting legs onto a seabed;
- lifting the hull and the elements of the shuttle;
- connecting each element of the shuttle to the section of supporting column via a linear traction device;
- separating the section of supporting column from the rest of said column;
- locking each traction device to each element of the shuttle;
- raising the elements of the shuttle to lift the section of supporting column;
- locking the traction devices alternately to the elements of the shuttle and the hull and lowering and raising said elements to gradually lift the section of supporting column;
- bringing the shuttle supporting the section of supporting column into contact with the hull;
- lowering the shuttle and the hull to float the hull;
- continuing the descent of the hull to cause the lifting legs of the structure to ascend by reaction;
- displacing the structure supporting the section of supporting column to remove the section from the production site and bring it to a loading site on a barge;
- applying the lifting legs on the unloading site on the seabed;
- lifting the hull and the shuttle to raise the section of supporting column above the water level;
- positioning the barge in the structure beneath said section;
- lowering the hull and the shuttle to place the section of supporting column onto the barge;
- detaching the traction devices from the section of supporting column; and
- bringing the barge carrying the section of supporting column to the disassembly quay and repeating these stages for other sections of said supporting column.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the hull is a U-shaped floating hull fitted with at least three lifting legs configured to rest on the seabed, each lifting leg supporting a mechanical displacement apparatus housed in a bearing framework of said hull, the

shuttle is positionable along the lifting legs and operable to move one of the framework elements of the production platform, said shuttle comprising at least three elements, each element of the at least three elements provided for a lifting leg of the at least three lifting legs, and each element comprises a mechanical drive positioned on the associated lifting leg, and operable to drive the respective element independently of remaining elements of the at least three elements, and a connecting apparatus configured to connect with the framework element.

12. (Previously Presented) The structure of claim 1, wherein the lifting legs comprise at least three lifting legs, and the elements of the shuttle comprise at least three elements, each element of the at least three elements provided for a respective lifting leg of the at least three lifting legs.

13. (New) A structure for decommissioning and transporting an offshore fixed oil production platform formed by a deck and at least one supporting column, said structure comprising:

- a U-shaped floating hull fitted with lifting legs configured to rest on the seabed, each lifting leg supporting a mechanical displacement apparatus housed in a bearing framework of said hull;

- a shuttle positionable along the lifting legs and configured to move one of the framework elements of the production platform, said shuttle comprising elements, each element provided for a respective lifting leg of the lifting legs, and each element comprising:

- a mechanical drive positioned on the associated lifting leg and configured to drive the respective element independently of remaining elements of the shuttle on the other legs; and

- a connecting apparatus configured to connect with the deck or the at least one supporting column of the oil production platform,

- wherein the connecting apparatus connects to the at least one supporting column of the platform and comprises for each element of the shuttle a linear vertical traction device comprising a chain or cable and two locking assemblies, one of said assemblies being supported by said element and the other of said assemblies being supported by the hull for a gradual vertical displacement of the supporting column by successive locking of said locking assemblies.

14. (New) The structure as claimed in claim 13, wherein each locking assembly comprises two opposing locks configured to tilt vertically toward one another between a position releasing the traction device and a position blocking the traction device.